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**THE
PORTUGUESE
PROVINCES:**

A Place for Pioneers

by
James Jackson Kilpatrick

prepared for the

AMERICAN-AFRICAN AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION

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INTRODUCTION

When the officers of the American-African Affairs Association learned late in 1967 that James Jackson Kilpatrick, the distinguished columnist for the Washington Star Syndicate, had just returned from a visit to Angola and Mozambique, we made haste to invite him to set down his impressions for publication and distribution by the Association. What follows is his report, and I think you will agree with me that it a fascinating and penetrating study of these distant lands.

Mr. Kilpatrick is well known to members and friends of the Association as the principal reporter of the three-man team dispatched by us to Rhodesia in the spring of 1967 to conduct an independent investigation of the situation there. In the present article, he is dealing with regions possessing a totally different cultural heritage; but it is not the least of the pleasures of reading Mr. Kilpatrick's works that their literary quality is consistently high. I am confident that you will enjoy "The Portuguese Provinces: A Place For Pioneers", and will find it a valuable contribution to American understanding of the African reality.

William R. Rusher,
Co-Chairman
American-African Affairs Association

February, 1968

THE PORTUGUESE PROVINCES:

A Place For Pioneers

James Jackson Kilpatrick

It is the most commonplace of observations—every American visitor is struck by the same impression—to remark that southern Africa is peculiarly “pioneer country.” Whatever the thought may lack in novelty, it makes up in striking truth. The traveler who attempts to learn something of Rhodesia and South Africa finds his sense of the Great West confirmed and strengthened by a follow-up visit to Angola and to Mozambique. This is the good and inviting land; it is the hard and perilous land as well.

Doubtless the pioneer parallels ought not to be pushed too far. The Ovimbundu, Bakongo and Kimbundu of Angola, for one thing, are not only more numerous than the Apaches, Comanches and Sioux of General Custer’s day; they also occupy a completely different position politically. Portugal’s object is not to make war upon the Chokwe and Cuanhama; Portugal’s object is to get them into school. In Mozambique, the busy, bustling cities of Lourenco Marques and Beira have reached a level of commerce and industry that is relatively more advanced than Kansas City and San Francisco in the days of the opening of the American West.

Allowing for all this, the pioneer impression persists. To fly in a small plane over Angola and Mozambique is to recapture an impression of Wyoming and Utah as they must have looked more than a century ago. Beyond the cities, the limitless land unrolls, vast, empty, waiting. The lumbering prairie schooners of Kansas have yielded to lorries, Jeeps, Land Rovers, Piper Cubs. The isolated rancher or miner is not wholly isolated; he is linked by radio to the twentieth century world outside. New power lines, ungainly as giraffes, march in single file across the hills. But when the sun goes down, the bush is Bible-black. Only the animals move. So the American mesa country must have been, when men traveled by horse toward unknown horizons. The Portuguese provinces are waking from the sleep of centuries. Economically they have passed a threshhold point; looking ahead, they see the opening door.

Angola lies upon the west coast of southern Africa, a land of 481,000 square miles, twice the size of Texas. A recent estimate places the population at 5,200,000, of whom 250,000 or about 5 per cent, are of European extraction. The Africans are almost entirely Bantu in origin; they are divided into nine tribal groupings and four principal dialects.

Angola's history dates from its discovery in 1482 by the Portuguese explorer Diego Cao. The land then was loosely ruled by the King of the Congo. His authority soon passed to Portuguese hands, and except for a few years in the mid-seventeenth century, when Dutch invaders took control, Portugal has exercised effective sovereignty over Angola ever since.

The fact has contemporary significance. With so long a history behind them, the Portuguese reject the notion that they are Johnnies-come-lately in Africa. They cannot accept the view of the

United Nations General Assembly that Angola is a mere "colony" of the European metropole. On the contrary, the Portuguese look upon the African provinces as integral parts of the Portuguese whole. American visitors are reminded repeatedly by their hosts of the analogy of Hawaii and Alaska, equally remote from the mainland American Union. In the years before the two territories achieved statehood, one is asked, would the United States have tolerated international intervention in their domestic administration? Surely we would have objected. By the same reasoning, it is urged, Portugal will continue to maintain her position that problems of the African provinces are entirely her own domestic affairs, and hence beyond the authority of the United Nations.

Portugal's case is strengthened by the very nature of the multi-racial, or non-racial society that has developed in the two provinces. Unlike South Africa and Rhodesia, Portugal shuns racial classification of every sort. Tribal governments hold no official status in Angola and are recognized only for political courtesy in Mozambique. Voting is by a single roll. The expanding system of public education is completely integrated. Persons of African descent face no racial impediments in property ownership or in labor. Angola's legislative council is composed of 34 members; about one-third of them are Africans. With every year that passes, the number of Africans in the civil service increases. The Secretary of Education is an African; so is the director of customs. Almost half of all public employees, including the police, are African or mulatto. Finally, it is said, through generations of interracial marriage, blood lines have become so intermingled that a single proper noun suffices: The people of Angola are simply "Portuguese."

The objective observer must be forgiven a few reservations. It is apparent, especially in small towns and rural areas, that a sharp line of demar-

cation separates the indigenous black from the indigenous or immigrant European. Relatively speaking, only a handful of blacks occupy positions at the managerial level in government or commerce. As a matter of law, segregation does not exist; socially and economically, it is a palpable fact of life in Angola.

To be sure, segregation is a palpable fact of life in Westchester County as well; and there is this to be said of the Portuguese promise to achieve a genuinely non-racial society in the African provinces, that a prodigious effort is being made to pull the Africans up. Over the past three years, enrollment in Angola's largely African technical schools has jumped from 7,700 to 11,600. In the province as a whole, roughly 66 per cent of all school-age children are now in school. Angola's Governor General Camillo de Miranda Rebocho Vaz is not satisfied with the figure; his administration is seeking earnestly to expand the enrollment of African pupils, but the obstacles are immense.

The greatest of the problems is rooted in the low population densities of the rural areas. In many remote parts of Angola, a hundred square miles will not turn up a hundred children of school age. Roads in such areas are little more than trails. The prevailing tongue is a tribal dialect. How are these children to be brought together for classes? Where are teachers to be found? The typical rural African family, subsisting in a mud hut, has had little motivation for learning in the past. Under the circumstances, it is perhaps greatly to Portugal's credit that even two-thirds of the children are receiving some education.

By general agreement, the next two decades should witness swift advancement for the African people of Angola. A number of considerations support this optimistic view.

Political forces plainly will continue to push the Portuguese government in the direction of inter-

nal reforms. "Independence" is the talismanic word; the U.N.'s General Assembly demands it unceasingly; neighboring Zambia and the Congo have it. Portugal is determined not to grant independence in either Angola or Mozambique, but the Salazar government sensibly, if belatedly, recognizes that if bloody revolution is to be avoided, the African majority must be able to see a satisfactory way of life in continued Portuguese affiliation.

Ironically, the several terrorist organizations, mistakenly described as "nationalist" groups, now appear to have aided Portuguese efforts to maintain the provincial status. Disturbances in Angola began in 1959 and came to an appalling climax in 1961 with the butchery of Europeans along 300 miles of Congolese border. But the terrorists did not kill Europeans only. In the savage rekindling of ancient tribal animosities, thousands of Angola's blacks suffered also. A backlash process set in. Prior to 1961, a considerable sentiment for independence existed among blacks and whites alike; today, one is told, that sentiment has sharply diminished. The protective presence of Portuguese troops appears vastly preferable to the violent raids of Holden Roberto's guerrillas. And as one unexpected dividend, the recurring threat of terrorist attacks has prompted many isolated African compounds to resettle in safer, larger communities where public education now becomes a feasible possibility.

In the winter of 1967-68, the terrorist organizations, suffering themselves from internal dissension, appeared to be under reasonable control. The principal group, the Union of the Populations of Angola (UPA), is thought to command a following within Angola of not more than 10,000. Under Roberto's leadership, the organization continues to operate from headquarters in Kinshasa. Opposed to the UPA is the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), headquar-

tered in Brazzaville, led by Dr. Angostinho Neto. The MPLA guerrillas, raiding largely from Zambia, are excellently armed and trained by Russian and Cuban resources. They have created local disturbances in southeast Angola, in the general area of Luso and Catombo, and have harassed the Benguelan railway, but authorities in Luanda believe the raids can be contained.

To counter the terrorist attacks, Portugal maintains some 45,000 to 50,000 troops in the field, augmented by up to 2,000 militia. A Selective Service system is in full operation. By the end of 1967, approximately 20,000 Angolan men, without regard to race, had been drafted for three-year enlistment periods. Some 750 Portuguese troops have been killed in action in Angola, but most of them died in the 1961 fighting. Militarily, the outlook is good.

Economic forces also are playing an encouraging role in Angola's future. In 1968, two additional 75,000-kilowatt generators will be installed at the massive Cambambwe power plant on the Cuanza River southeast of Luanda. Built in 1962 at a cost of \$43 million, the hydroelectric installation is the pride of Angola. As demand for power increases, the dam will be raised; other dams will be built upstream; the prospect is for an abundant power supply over the foreseeable future. At the end of 1967, negotiations were underway for both a steel mill and an aluminum processing plant.

In an effort to attract foreign capital, Angola offers a number of incentives, including a program of tax exemption for periods of five to ten years. Technical education of a labor force is expanding rapidly, though it is freely admitted that skilled labor is in short supply. The generally low income level of the African people serves to restrict the domestic consumer market, but this situation is improving. Wage rates start at a gov-

ernment-fixed minimum of 17½ escudos per day (about 55 cents); major employers also must provide housing, clothing, medical care, recreational facilities, and other benefits. This system of benevolent corporate paternalism, under strict government control, appears to work well.

Angola's principal need, as described by the Governor General, is for a massive inflow of capital and technical skill. "We could take thousands upon thousands of technically trained people," he says. "We are getting only hundreds and hundreds." The country is rich in copper, manganese, phosphates, tungsten, titanium, and diamonds; the discovery of oil in northern Cabinda in 1966, now under development by Gulf, has created boom conditions there. A housing market of significant proportions is in prospect. Angola is the third largest producer of coffee in the world. Emigrant farmers and livestock growers are offered title to up to 60,000 acres of land after three to five years of successful production.

Modern-day pioneers who may wish to tackle Angola will find life in the back country hard but endurable, and potentially rewarding. The capital city of Luanda will remind American visitors of Charleston and Savannah—arches, verandas, columns; houses of pale green, rose, beige, bright blue; native women, standing straight as 6 o'clock, with baskets on their heads; luxury apartments only a few blocks from thatch-and-mud native slums. Air service is complicated by political embargoes over most of Africa, but good jet schedules link Luanda with Lisbon, Johannesburg, Salisbury and Beira. Costs of living are moderately high. English is spoken as a nearly universal second language. Crime is almost unknown.

Many of the foregoing observations apply with equal effect to Mozambique, on Africa's southeastern coast, though Mozambique is larger in population (7,000,000) and smaller in area (303,000 square miles) than her sister province



of Angola. The principal cities of Lourenco Marques and Beira are more sophisticated than Luanda and Benguela; the pace of urban living is faster; the second language often is French; and Mozambique culturally looks more to the Middle East and East than to the West.

One senses in Mozambique, moreover, a wider range of both problems and opportunities than one finds in Angola. Here everything is more intense.

Relatively speaking, the European (white) community in Mozambique is quite small, numbering no more than 145,000 in all—about two per cent of the total. The great bulk of the population is composed of African tribal groups of Bantu stock—the Tsonga and Changones in the south, the Sena and Manica in the center, the Macuas across the north, the savage Makondes along the Tanzanian border, and the Nianja in the Lake Nyassa area bordering Malawi. Each of the major tribes has retained its own dialect and basic tribal organization. In the south, a process of native assimilation moves forward steadily; here the South African gold mines offer a source of contract employment, and the industries of Lourenco Marques exert a modernizing influence. In the north, the situation is quite different. In the vast area beyond Nampula, between the Lurio and Lugenda rivers, civilization advances slowly. This is wild and rugged country. Along the coast, from Lumbo to Nacala and Porto Amelia, the shallow opal waters give back the azure sky. Mountains rise abruptly from the coastal plain, rocky archipelagos in a sea of brown and green. Here and there, cotton plantations attract a force of native labor. Few Western visitors penetrate into Cabo Delgado. Its resources await another day.

For a variety of reasons—years of indifference by Portuguese rulers, absence of industrial capital, disunity among the sharply separated tribes, diffi-

culties in communication—the social and economic development of Mozambique has proceeded slowly. Estimates vary on the number of children now receiving schooling. At the end of 1967, the figure reportedly was in the neighborhood of 600,000, but the figure is deceptive. Education is compulsory only through the fourth year, and the compulsion is difficult to enforce. Fewer than 12 per cent of the children go past this primary schooling, and most of these are children of European extraction. An estimated 600—one out of a thousand—go on to higher education.

The situation is not wholly bleak. Each year sees a substantial jump in the percentage of African pupils going on to industrial, commercial and liberal arts training. More than a hundred trade schools came into existence between 1960 and 1966; the new lyceums that one visits in Beira and Lourenco Marques are attractively designed and apparently well administered, but they are sorely in need of library and laboratory facilities. A new university in the capital offers limited opportunities in higher education. Medical instruction is available, but the medical school attracts lamentably few African students. An interesting experiment in education by radio, intended for isolated communities throughout the province, is supplemented by mobile teaching “brigades” whose object is to raise the social and cultural levels of the bush. Plainly, much remains to be done.

Economic development within Mozambique compares generally with conditions in Angola. The province needs capital; it needs skilled technicians; it offers strong incentives for Western managers and administrators possessed of the pioneer spirit. Mozambique's mineral resources, chiefly gold, bauxite, and tantalite, scarcely have been touched. Textile manufacturing and food processing offer attractive opportunities. Mozambique does well in cotton production; since 1966, the province has processed its own large output of

cashew nuts; and though cattle raising is handicapped by the untamed tsetse fly, the area south of the Limpopo holds a rich potential for livestock. Tourism is increasing in importance as an economic factor. At Gorongosa, Mozambique maintains one of the most spectacular game preserves in the world; two thousand miles of shore line offer hundreds of secluded and beautiful beaches.

Most of Mozambique's industrial economy revolves around the port cities of Lourenco Marques and Beira. Their development has been handicapped politically, by the United Nations' sanctions upon Rhodesia and by the general disfavor manifested within the world community toward Portugal's policies in Africa. Beira has suffered severely under the British blockade against Rhodesian commerce. A new oil pipeline, connecting Beira and Salisbury, is kept in chains under dramatic lock and key. The port of Lourenco Marques has been less affected; its gross commerce rose from 7.6 million tons in 1964 to an estimated 11.5 million tons in 1967, as new trade with Swaziland and South Africa replaced losses in Rhodesian business. For a city of barely 200,000 population, Lourenco Marques boasts remarkably modern port facilities, especially for bulk cargoes of sugar, chrome, manganese, copper and iron. Settlement of the Rhodesian problem would benefit Mozambique immensely; the province reckons its direct loss, as a consequence of the sanctions, at nearly \$50 million in port traffic and rail freight through 1967. With a typical Portuguese combination of hope, pessimism and wry humor, Portugal has sent the United Nations a deadpan bill in this amount. There is no foreseeable prospect of the U.N.'s paying up.

Problems of internal security continue to trouble the province, but early in 1968 these appeared to be more of a costly and dangerous nuisance than a serious threat to Mozambique's survival within the Portuguese arrangement. Two insurgent

organizations are active, but again, it is a mistake to think of them as "nationalists" or "liberation forces" or "freedom fighters." The tribal blacks of Mozambique, by and large, have no more identification with a prospective "nation of Mozambique" than the blacks of Angola have a national identification with their western province. The ostensible purpose of the insurgent leaders is to "establish democracy." This is sham. Their first object is power; their second is booty.

The larger of the two groups is the Mozambique Liberation Front, known as FRELIMO, headed by Western-educated Edouardo Mondlane. For the past several years, the organization has been headquartered in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where Dr. Mondlane is living with no apparent discomfort in a palatial villa. A veteran fellow-traveler, the onetime instructor at Syracuse University reportedly is drawing support from both Peiping and Moscow. In the autumn of 1967, Portuguese forces captured one of the FRELIMO bands. They found automatic rifles, machine guns and mortars provided by China, and explosives provided by Russia. By every indication, FRELIMO operates with the complete support of the Tanzanian government, which provides trucks for the terrorists and assists them in operating training camps along the 500-mile border. For manpower, Mondlane relies chiefly upon Makonde warriors, who traditionally have made life miserable for their tribal neighbors. The Makondes, who played a leading role in the Zanzibar revolution, are described as fierce fighters, rough and hardy, but inclined to internal quarrels. Not all of them are willing to stick with Lazaro Kavandame, their "operational commander." A loose alliance between the Makondes and the less warlike Nianjas seemed to be weakening toward the end of 1967.

Mondlane publicly has claimed domination over some 800,000 persons living in the Niassa and Cabo Delgado districts. The claim is disputed by

Portuguese authorities in Mozambique, who say the Makonde terrorists control only a few communities in the northern tip of the Mueda plateau. The Portuguese estimate FRELIMO strength at 3,500 guerillas inside Mozambique, plus another 2,500 in training in Tanzania. It is a force of sufficient size to tie down a large number of Portuguese troops (the number is classified), but Portuguese commanders say the situation is contained. They are pressing a campaign to win support from the tiny villages that freckle the high plateau; companies of local militia are being recruited with some success. At the end of 1967, some 400 villages were thought to be "loyal, secure, and pro-Portugal" with the contested area.

A smaller terrorist organization, the Mozambique Revolutionary Committee (COREMO), operates out of headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia, with the manifest sanction of Zambia's President Kenneth D. Kaunda. Little is known of COREMO; it was established in 1965, and relies for its principal support upon the Chinese Communists. Toward the end of 1967, its activities appeared to be slowly increasing.

Remnants also exist of still a third rebel outfit, the Mozambique African National Union (MANU), which was formed in 1961 by a group of Makonde exiles in Kenya under the leadership of Matthew Michinji Mmale. From 1962 until 1964, MANU was merged with Mondlane's FRELIMO; then the merger broke up in a spate of accusations that Mondlane was an "American stooge." Still other splinter groups acknowledge the leadership of David Mabunda, Marcelinos dos Santos, the Rev. Uriah Simango, and a white physician, Dr. Elder Martins. The combinations of rebel affiliations, it is said, shift with the political winds. As 1968 began, none of the winds seemed likely to blow up an immediate gale. The Organization of African Unity, despite some huffing and puffing in October of 1967, appeared to

be declining as an effective and influential force. Meanwhile, Malawi's no-nonsense president, Dr. H. K. Banda, was emerging as a major force for peace in central Africa. Great hope was held that his friendly pragmatism might yet produce a tolerable pattern of co-existence for all of Africa south of Tanzania and the Congo.

The recurring guerrilla raids along the distant borders arouse little concern in the major cities of both Angola and Mozambique. The residents are too busy adjusting to the swift changes that urbanization—and the U.N.'s persistent pressure—have brought upon them. In both provinces, high-rise buildings are springing up. An increasing percentage of the African people abandon native dress in favor of Western clothing. At every hand, one notices the spread of American products—Pepsi, Seven-Up, Coca Cola, Orange Crush; Shell, Mobil, Gulf. In the newsstands, a comic book leads the young Portuguese-African down the dime novel trail: *Batman Solve o Crime Perfeito!* One flies in a Piper Comanche over some of the most primitive land on earth, and the plane radio brings "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Commercial wrestling has come to Luanda. Dr. Fu Manchu plays in the outdoor cinema. Book-stalls offer Truman Capote, John O'Hara, Ian Fleming. The streets are thick with traffic. The airport at Beria is as jammed as LaGuardia at shuttle time. Only the pervasive presence of Portuguese troops, handsome young devils in dark berets, suggests that anything might be amiss. At the outskirts of the principal cities, car-checks go on by night and day; and far beyond the cities, in the plains, the hills, the high plateaus, in jungle and in desert, the tribal life persists. Barely half a mile out of Luanda, by a busy four-lane highway, a monkey sits in a baobab tree, and blinks his eyes as the Mercedes roll by.

Back in Lisbon, the problems of the emerging provinces increasingly occupy the attention of

Portugal's aging premier Antonio Salazar. During the course of an exclusive interview at Estoril, Dr. Salazar strongly defended Portugal's policies, past and present, in the gradual development of the African provinces. One question was intended to elicit a progress report on growth of the "multi-racial" concept.

"The question leaves me under the impression that it is believed the aim of achieving a multi-racial society was defined only a short time ago, and has only now commenced to be put into effect in Angola and Mozambique. This view, if it exists, is not correct. As defined by the Constitution, the Portuguese nation has for a long time considered itself, and is, in fact, multi-racial. Out of the discovery of new lands came the successive aggregation of a national whole. Whether the inhabitants, where there were any, were black or red or yellow was not of the essence. The essential was that the native populations were considered equal in status with the European subjects of Portugal. So that Angola and Mozambique and Guinea were part of the Kingdom of Portugal, and not colonies in the nineteenth century sense, held by sovereign power for economic purposes. That being the case, the advancement of the population proceeds in the provinces as it does here, the only differences being those which may result from individual capabilities and the local economies."

Dr. Salazar was asked about U.N. pressure upon Portugal. He responded with a sweeping criticism of those whom he described as "believers in instant civilization."

"It is a fact," he said, "that the United Nations is exerting pressure upon us in respect to the political evolution to be promoted in Angola and Mozambique. And it is not only the Africans of color and origin who exert this pressure; it is the Asians; and it is the Westerners, bound to conceptions of their own history, who have difficulty

in understanding that we did not participate with them in the division of Africa into colonial territories, for which reason we are not obligated to follow their example.

"Western Europe, tired as a result of World War II, and finding it impossible to resist pressure exerted upon her, successively granted independence to the African territories under her sovereignty. This she should not have done—first, because there were no 'nations' constituted there which could be turned into independent states; and second, because the majority of them lacked the economic resources on which to form an administration of their own. No heed was paid to the fact that there had not yet been formed a political, administrative and economic elite, capable of managing the collective interest of which, incidentally, in most cases not the slightest awareness existed.

"Without European sovereignty, without the financial means, without the whites who ran the administration and opened and managed undertakings, stability and progress could not have been maintained. This should have been foreseen; but it was not; and with few exceptions, the so-called independent states of Africa have retrogressed.

"The idea has gained currency that the civilization of a people can be achieved through a process of development to which a definite and short period of time can be fixed. This false notion forms the basis of the misconception of those powers whose experience should have warned them against committing such a great error. The idea that an aggregation of sometimes hostile tribes can be converted into a duly structured nation, simply by spending large sums of money, is also partly responsible for the situation.

"For all these reasons, we of Portugal remain indifferent to the attacks of the United Nations, unleashed by Africans or by Westerners. We

would remain indifferent to them even were the Portuguese situation, from the sociological or political viewpoint, identical in Africa to the position of the colonial powers. And I began by showing that it is not."

It is possible to credit Dr. Salazar's sincerity absolutely, and still to make the point that Portugal has not been wholly "indifferent" to the pressures of outside opinion. Both terrorist raids and U.N. resolutions manifestly have had an effect upon Portugal's relationship with her African provinces. More than four and a half centuries have passed since Portuguese explorers and missionaries planted flag and cross in Africa. For the most part, these were years of the slave trade, of primitive existence, of colonial administration, of political apathy, of economic and social indifference.

Now comes a time of renaissance for Portugal's provinces—a time of protected labor, minimum wages, compulsory schooling, low-cost housing, medical benefits, new roads and hospitals and power plants. It is still Bible-black by night in Gorongosa, and the night has yet a time to run, but in Portugal's policy of accelerated gradualism a pale and hopeful light now rims the African sky.

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